

## Message Text

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15

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7339

INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONGEN HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 15939

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : BTRA, SNAR, TH, SCUL

SUBJECT : SEARCH FOR THE FOSSILS OF PEKING MAN

SUMMARY: AN AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN FROM CHICAGO IS TRYING TO FIND AN UNNAMED CHINESE GENERAL IN THAILAND WHO ALLEGEDLY KNOWS THE LOCATION OF THE MISSING PEKING MAN FOSSILS. WE WARNED HIM AGAINST ANY DIRECT CONTACT WITH CHINESE IRREGULAR FORCES GENERALS LI WEN-HUAN OR TUAN HSI-WEN BECAUSE OF THE POLITICAL SENSITIVITY INVOLVED. END SUMMARY.

1. CHRISTOPHER G. JANUS OF BACHE AND CO. IN CHICAGO, AND PRESIDENT OF THE CHICAGO HARVARD ALUMNI CLUB, CALLED ON THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR OCTOBER 11 TO ASK FOR INFORMATION ABOUT A CHINESE GENERAL IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE. JANUS SAID THAT WHILE ON A VISIT TO CHINA LAST YEAR, PRC OFFICIAL ASKED HIM TO HELP FIND THE PEKING MAN FOSSILS WHICH DISAPPEARED IN CHINA DURING WORLD WAR II. THE CHINESE HAD LAST ENTRUSTED SEVERAL FOOTLOCKERS FULL OF THEM TO THE U.S. MARINES GUARDING THE EMBASSY IN PEKING AT THE TIME OF THE JAPANESE INVASION. THE JAPANESE DETAINED THE MARINES, AND THE FOSSILS GOT LOST.

2. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION JANUS HAS RECEIVED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, A CHINESE GENERAL WHO FLED THE MAINLAND IN 1949 KNOWS  
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THE LOCATION OF THE FOSSILS. UNFORTUNATELY NONE OF HIS INFORMANTS

WOULD GIVE HIM THE NAME OF THE GENERAL. HE TRIED TO FIND THE GENERAL FIRST IN TAIWAN, THEN IN HONG KONG. IN HONG KONG SOMEONE TOLD HIM THE GENERAL IS IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE, AND THAT HE COULD LOCATE THE GENERAL THROUGH A GERMAN NAMED HARDY STOCKMAN IN CHIANG MAI.

3. WE TOLD JANUS THAT THERE ARE TWO CHINESE IRREGULAR FORCES GENERALS IN THAILAND WHO CROSSED FROM YUNNAN PROVINCE INTO BURMA IN 1949, BUT THAT THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE THEY WOULD HAVE THE FOSSILS SINCE THE GENERALS HAD BEEN OPERATING IN YUNNAN DURING WW II. MOREOVER, SINCE THESE GENERALS HAVE A HISTORY OF OPIUM TRAFFICKING AND FIGHTING THE GUB, WE ADVISED JANUS AGAINST ANY DIRECT CONTACT WITH THEM. JANUS SAID HE MAY TRY TO CONTACT STOCKMAN, BUT WILL NOT DEAL DIRECTLY WITH LI OR TUAN.

4. THE "BANGKOK POST" OCTOBER 12 PUBLISHED AN INTERVIEW WITH JANUS IN WHICH HE DESCRIBED HIS SEARCH FOR THE FOSSILS AND THE GENERAL. THE ARTICLE QUOTED JANUS AS OFFERING A \$150,000 REWARD TO THE MAN WHO COULD DELIVER THE BONES TO HIM.

5. COMMENT: JANUS IS OBVIOUSLY FASCINATED WITH THE MYSTERY OF THE PEKING MAN FOSSILS AND REMAINS INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING HIS "LEAD" TO THE CHINESE GENERAL, WHOSE NAME HE STILL DOES NOT KNOW. HE SEEMS SINCERE IN HIS QUEST, AND IN HIS DESIRE TO AVOID POLITICAL PROBLEMS FOR THE USG. WE HOPE HIS SENSE OF ADVENTURE WILL NOT LEAD HIM BEYOND CONTACTS WITH THE GERMAN INTERMEDIARY. GIVEN THEIR BUSINESS ACUMEN, NOT TO MENTION THEIR NEGOTIABLE SCRUPLES, WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO DISCOVER LI OR TUAN, AFTER DIGESTING THE "POST" ARTICLE, TO COME UP WITH SEVERAL FOOTLOCKERS OF SOMEONE'S BONES.  
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